"Since I met with this case, I have had an opportunity of examining more minutely the state of the parts in this disease, in the body of an old woman, which I was requested to open. In her, a tumour nearly five inches in length, and nine or ten in circumference, protruded between the thighs, presenting all the external characters noticed in the above. Being anxious to have a view of the parts within the pelvis, I opened the abdomen for that purpose. The protruded vagina formed a large cul-de-sac, in which were contained the uterus and its appendages, the bladder and part of the small intestines. The parts were much altered and thickened by inflammation, and bound together by innumerable bands of new membrane, which could with difficulty be separated by the fingers. The bladder was much smaller than usual.

"The everted vagina was not unlike to skin, and when cut into, was found to be nearly half an inch in thickness, and remarkably hard.

"Procidentia uteri is, comparatively speaking, a rare disease in young and unmarried females. It would appear, that whatever tends to relax or dilate the passages, gives a tendency to this most troublesome complaint; and hence it most frequently happens to those who have had large families, and who have been much troubled with leucorrhœal discharges. It is very troublesome, and not unfrequently incurable. The urine cannot be retained so long as usual, which is easily accounted for; as in the dissection related above, the fundus vesicæ was dragged along with the uterus, and retained in its new situation by membranous bands, which prevented its distention; its passage, also, along the tumour, produces excoriation and great uneasiness. In the treatment of this formidable disease, it is of the utmost importance, as soon as its nature is known, to replace, and retain the parts in their natural situation; but it not unfrequently happens, that if they have been long displaced and unattended to, it is impossible to do so, and dangerous to persist in our attempts at reduction, if great difficulty is experienced. In the dissection related above, the parts were not only altered in texture, and consequently would, if reduced, have operated as a foreign body, but were so bound down by adhesions, as would have prevented their reduction, or, if ruptured, have occasioned such a degree of inflammation as in the end would have been fatal. In old and irreducible cases, therefore, the best and only thing that can be done, is to support the displaced parts, in order to guard against their further descent, and to protect them from injury.

"Another interesting fact derived from the above case is the confirmation of the already received opinion, that the catamenial discharge is elaborated by the uterus, and not, as was formerly imagined, by the vagina, as in this case the secretion was seen oozing from the mouth of the uterus, so that, added to those related by Morgagni, and Dr. William Hunter, it sufficiently proves that the catamenia are secreted by the uterus alone."—*Medico-Chirug. Rev. Jan.* 1830, *from the Glasgow Journal, No. VII.*

MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE.

72. *Detection of Arsenic seven years after Death.*—M. ORFILA communicated to the Royal Academy of Medicine, at their meeting on the 1st of December last, the following case. In June last, says M. Orfila, I was asked whether an exhumed body, seven years after burial, would exhibit any signs of poisoning by arsenic, and what chemical processes were, in such a case, the best to be resorted to. My answer was, that at such a period the body would very likely be so thoroughly decomposed as to make any inquiry impossible. In case however the lateral portion of the vertebral column, especially at the lumbar and dorsal vertebræ, were found covered with a blackish substance, this might be acted upon in the manner described in my work on poisons. After this question had been addressed to me, and I had answered in the above manner, MM. Ozanam

and Ive, were requested by the "Procureur du Roi," to proceed to the exhumation of the body of a person who was supposed to have been poisoned in 1822. Their inquiries into the cause by which the individual in question had died, have been successful, and tend to prove, in the clearest manner, the existence of arsenic in the dead body. The following are the details:—

The grave had been made in a dry and gravelly soil with a small quantity of the sulphate of lime, which latter circumstance undoubtedly most contributed towards the remarkable conservation of the body; the coffin was not in the least injured, the bottom only was tinged with a brownish fluid. The identity of the body was proved by the "curé," the grave-digger, and the national guards, who had escorted the funeral; besides, the hair of the head had not undergone the least alteration, the teeth were still in their sockets, except one canine tooth, which the individual had lost before his death; and lastly, the undertaker recognised the coffin. The head, trunk, and extremities, were in a state of perfect integrity; the chest was collapsed; the heart and lungs moulded into a semi-fluid mass of black colour, without any smell. The head and extremities were left in the coffin, as being useless for the investigation; the mass on which the inquiry was to be made was of nine pounds weight, two of which were, however, not subjected to the inquiry, but reserved for the repetition of the experiments. The substance was boiled several times, and then evaporated to a dry extract, which was again dissolved in a sufficient quantity of distilled water. This solution was of a dark-brown colour, which was but incompletely destroyed by chlorine; it was again evaporated, and the remainder detonated with the nitrate of potass. The residuum having cooled, was dissolved in a saturated solution of nitric acid, and now finally submitted to different tests, all of which evidently showed the presence of arsenic in the fluid. A portion of it being mixed with charcoal, and heated in a glass tube, MM. C. and J. succeeded even in reducing the arsenic to its metallic form. Another portion mixed with the solution of sulphuretted hydrogen, gave sulphuretted arsenic, which being heated with caustic potash, gave a bright metallic layer, proved to be soluble in distilled water by a current of oxygen.—*La Lancette Française.*

73. *Case of Vagitus Uterinus.*—Dr. A. F. Holmes, Lecturer on Chemistry and Materia Medica in Macgill College, Montreal, communicated to Dr. Duncan the following case:—"On the 29th November, 1828, I was called to a lady in labour of her sixth child. The fontanelle presented, but the pelvis being capacious, and her labours generally easy, no attempt was made to change the position. The head continuing to descend, the mouth lay on the pubis, and the examining finger could easily be introduced into it. The occiput did not yet occupy fully the cavity of the sacrum. At this time I heard sounds like the cries of a child whose mouth was muffled by some covering, but not being very distinct, and not being at all prepared for them, I thought, when they ceased, that they must have been produced by flatus in the intestines of the mother. In the course of a short time, however, the cries were repeated, and with the greatest distinctness, so as not to admit of a doubt that they proceeded from the child. The mother much alarmed, inquired the cause of these noises, and required to be assured they were not indicative of any danger. The pains being brisk, the head was soon forced down and expelled. The child was a female, and is still alive and thriving. This case appears to me so curious, though easy of explanation, when the position of the mouth is considered, that I am induced to draw up this notice, not having met with any thing similar on record, and as it is entirely different from the incredible stories we have of the fœtus emitting cries before the commencement of labour."—*Ed. Med. and Surg. Journ. Jan.* 1830.

74. *Poisoning with Acetate of Copper.*—A lace-worker, twenty-six years old, of a very melancholic tendency, and who had attempted to destroy himself with the water-hemlock five years before, put eight *sous* pieces into a glass of strong

vinegar, and left them there for seven days. At two o'clock of the afternoon, having made a good dinner, he drank first one-half, and then in fifteen minutes the remainder of his potion. Not content with this, he washed the coins in more vinegar, brandy, and aniseed water, all of which he also swallowed. Three hours afterwards he was found insensible. The muscles were violently convulsed; the limbs in the intervals of the convulsions were stiff, the teeth set, the breathing interrupted, the pulse small, hard, and very slow, the pit of the stomach tender on pressure. With difficulty he was made to drink some glasses of hot water, which, however, did not make him vomit. In half an hour he recovered his senses, and told what he had taken. The white of eggs was immediately given in large quantity. The convulsions afterwards ceased rapidly, but he continued to hiccup till two in the morning. Next morning the pulse was full, slow, and intermitting: the belly drawn in, hard, and very painful on pressure; the skin pale; the convulsions partial and transient. Leeches were directed to be applied to the abdomen, and afterwards poultices; at the same time the white of eggs were persevered in; and the warm bath, with mild opiate injections were used. In the evening he had colic, dyspnœa, great agitation, hiccup, and a hard contracted pulse. The leeches were repeated. The urine at this time was scanty and scorching. He passed an indifferent night, but next morning was easier. The abdomen was not tender, the pulse was soft, and the urine was natural in quantity. In fourteen days after his admission he was dismissed cured.—*Revue Médicale, Sept.* 1829.

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75. *Determination of the Period that a Drowned Body has been in the Water.*—As the means of ascertaining, very nearly, the time which a dead body has been under water, may prove in some cases to be important in a judicial investigation, M. ALPH. DEVERGIE was authorized by the prefect of Paris, to observe and open the subjects deposited at the Morgue, a place to which all bodies are brought that have died by unknown means, or which are found in the public places of that city or in its neighbourhood. The number annually brought there is about three hundred.

After much investigation, M. A. Devergie assigns the following characters as the means of deciding the length of time the body has been submerged, supposing the weather to have been cold.

1. From three to five days.—Rigidity of the corpse; coldness; no contraction of the muscles by electrical stimulus; the epidermis of the hands beginning to whiten.

2. From four to eight days.—Suppleness of all the parts; no contraction from electricity; colour of the skin natural; epidermis of the palms of the hands very white.

3. From eight to twelve days.—Flaccidity of all the parts; epidermis of the backs of the hands beginning to whiten; face softened and presenting a wan appearance, different from that of the skin of the other parts of the body.

4. About fifteen days.—Face slightly swelled; red spots; greenish tint of the middle of the sternum; epidermis of the hands and feet totally white and beginning to fold.

5. About one month.—Face red, brownish; eyelids and lips green; breast reddish-brown and greenish in front; epidermis of the hands and feet white, loosened and folded as if by poultices.

6. About two months.—Face generally brownish and swelled; hair rather loose; epidermis of the hands and feet in a great degree detached; nails still adherent.

7. Two months and a half.—Epidermis and nails of the hands detached; epidermis of the feet detached, nails still adherent; in females, redness of the subcutaneous cellular tissue of the neck, of that which surrounds the trachea and organs in the cavity of the breast; partial saponification of the cheeks, of the chin, superficies of the breasts, groins, and anterior part of the thighs.

8. Three months and a half.—Destruction of part of the scalp, eyelids, nose;

partial saponification of the face, superior part of the neck and groins; corrosion and destruction of the skin on various parts of the body, epidermis of the hands and feet completely removed; nails gone.

9. Four months and a half.—Almost total saponification of the fat of the face, neck, groins, front of the thighs; commencement of a calcareous incrustation upon the thighs, and a saponification of the anterior part of the brain; most of the skin opaline; loosening and destruction of almost the whole of the scalp; scull bare, beginning to be very friable.—*Annales d'Hygiene publique, October,* 1829.

CHEMISTRY.

76. *Chemical Constitution of Acetic Ether.*—By a series of experimental researches, M. PLANIAVA has arrived at the conclusion, that acetic ether is formed of one equivalent of acetic acid, and two equivalents of alcohol; that therefore it is a sub-acetate of alcohol, and is represented by the No. 97.—*Kastner's Archives.*

77. *New Proximate Principle from Albumen.* By M. COUERBE.—White of egg was left to itself at a temperature of 17° or 18° F. It did not congeal, but thickened a little, and at the end of a month gave an abundant membranous network and a liquid matter, no putrid gas having been disengaged. The liquid was slightly examined, and by its decomposition gave carbonate of ammonia; hence it was concluded that the liquid contained the animal part of the albumen.

The membranous substance was white, translucid, and of a foliaceous structure, insipid, inodorous, and friable. Heated in a tube, it did not fuse, but was decomposed, swelling at the time, evolving no azoted products, but leaving a voluminous light charcoal difficult to burn. When decomposed by oxide of copper, it gave only water and carbonic acid. In cold water it did not dissolve: in boiling water it softened, melted, and looked like insoluble mucilage. Alcohol, ether, and acetic acid exerted no action upon it, hot, or cold. Sulphuric acid exerted little action at common temperatures; but by heat carbonized it, evolving an agreeable aromatic odour. Nitric acid acted but little when cold; by heat dissolved it, evolving nitrous gas. Muriatic acid dissolved it when heat was applied, and the solution remained clear on cooling; by dilution, a fine white powder was deposited.

Potash, with heat, dissolved it, and rendered the solution turbid, but did not cause any deposition in twenty-four hours.—*Annales de Chimie, Vol. XLI.*

78. *Preparation of Urea.* By M. HENRY.—Let a slight excess of the sub-acetate or the hydrate of lime be added to recent urine; a precipitate will fall which will contain salts formed by the union of the acids in the urine with oxide of lead, and also a combination of the mucus and animal matter present with the hydrate or subsalt used.

The clear fluid is to be acted upon by diluted sulphuric acid, added until in slight excess, to separate the lead present, and to act, during the future evaporation, upon the acetates of soda and lime which may be formed. The liquid is again to be freed from the precipitate, and quickly evaporated, animal charcoal being added to it during the ebullition. When clear the fluid is to be strained through a fine cloth; and concentrated to one-third of its bulk; on cooling, it will probably become a yellowish acicular crystalline mass, consisting of much urea and some salts. The crystals, when drained and pressed, are to be added to those produced by evaporating the mother water, also similarly treated; being thus freed from the brown viscid matter which previously accompanied them, they are to be treated with a small quantity of carbonate of soda, to de-